

CLAIMS

[1] A sheet feeder, comprising:

a sheet accommodating section configured to accommodate therein a stack of sheets;

a sheet pickup section configured to contact the stack of sheets and feed the sheets toward a feed path; and

sheet separator located downstream of the sheet pickup section, the sheet separator including a feed roller and a reverse roller,

wherein the reverse roller includes a sponge member having an outer periphery formed with a coating layer having a surface smoothed to such an extent as to have a gloss.

[2] The sheet feeder according to claim 1,

wherein the coating layer is formed by dipping the sponge member into a coating liquid.

[3] The sheet feeder according to claim 1,

wherein the coating layer comprises urethane rubber.

[4] The sheet feeder according to claim 1,

wherein the coating layer has a mean surface roughness R_a satisfying the following formula:

$$0.09 \leq R_a \leq 0.11.$$

[5] The sheet feeder according to claim 1,

wherein the sheet pickup section comprises a roller member having a hollow portion therein.

[6] An image reading apparatus, comprising:

a sheet feeder as recited in claim 1; and

an image reading section configured to read an image formed on each of the sheets fed by the sheet feeder.

[7] An image forming apparatus, comprising:

an image reading apparatus as recited in claim 6; and

an image forming section configured to form an image based on image data read by the image reading apparatus.

[8] An image forming apparatus, comprising:

a sheet feeder as recited in claim 1;

an image reading section configured to read an image formed on each of the sheets fed by the sheet feeder; and

an image forming section configured to form an image based on image data read by the image reading apparatus.